

London

Concia Albert, Head of Social Prescribing at One Westminster.
'Social Prescribing: Westminster'

Veronica Franklin Gould, President and **Cicely Ryder-Belson** Social Prescribing Coordinator, Arts 4 Dementia
'A4D dance and drama, Social Prescribing in Southwark'

Jenny Marshall, Head of Member Experience, Open Age.
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'Space to Connect.'

Concia Albert, Head of Social Prescribing at One Westminster, London.

CONCIA ALBERT, Head of Social Prescribing, One Westminster, has worked in the voluntary sector for some 13 years now, mainly for Westminster charities – and has specialised in health and wellbeing roles. She joined One Westminster’s Organisation Support Team as Health and Wellbeing Lead in 2018. From April 2020, Concia will take up the role of Head of Social Prescribing and manage social prescribing link workers (SPLW) and Westminster’s social prescribing offer.

‘Social Prescribing: Westminster’

One Westminster is the infrastructure organisation for voluntary and community services in the borough of Westminster in London. I will just tell you a little bit about our process. Social prescribing, as you know, looks at the social determinants of health, especially prevention. What is great about it is that we give people the time that they need to ensure that they can discuss those things that are really important to them, the things that matter to them, through a person-centred approach.

Social prescribing is a social movement; and for us it is being able to know that when someone goes to their GP, they do not only have to discuss their medical need, but they can also discuss their social need. The GP in that appointment, whilst they are speaking with the patient can think of another way to ensure that the person is looked after. So, whilst that person is waiting for the memory clinic assessment, they have the opportunity to refer them to SP.

In Westminster, we do this by a task. The GP will send the task over to the SPLW who will then action that task by contacting the patient, usually by telephone. If they can’t get to the phone we will write to them or email them, if there is an email address available. They will connect people to activities that will help them to enjoy life whilst they’re waiting, because usually the wait for the memory clinic can take a little while, and they can get worried and anxious in that time, and here is an opportunity to ensure that they have something that gives their life meaning, and normality in a sense can continue while they wait for the memory clinic assessment to come up.

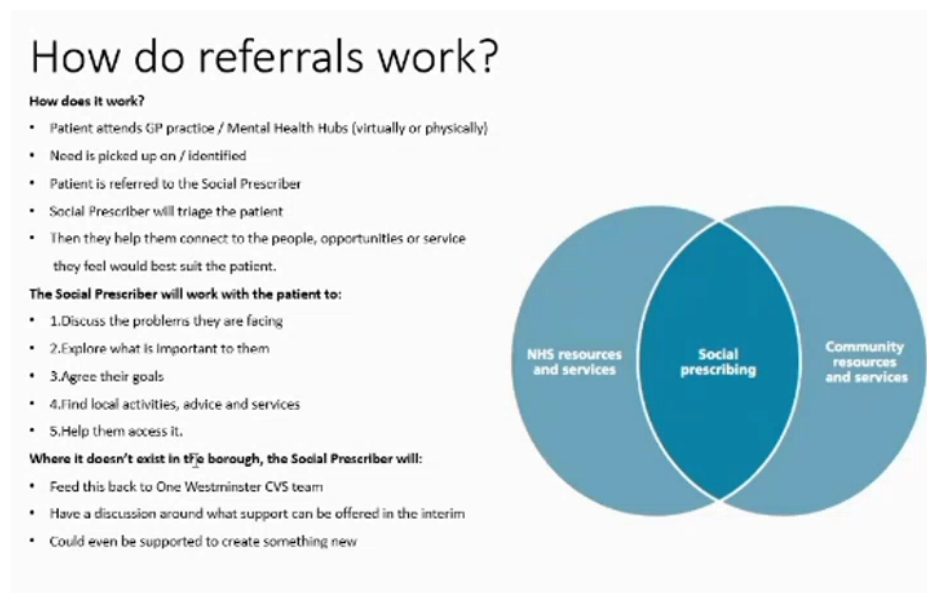
I am thinking of a patient who went to the GP and was waiting for a referral to the memory clinic, and in that moment, the GP was able to say, ‘I understand that you are worried, but we’ve got SPLW here, and they will be able to sit with you and go through what can be offered whilst you wait.’ Just getting that person’s consent to ensure that this is

Concia Albert, One Westminster, London.

what they want is also a part of the process. We are finding that patients are welcoming this intervention.

Here is a breakdown of how our referrals work:

The patients visits the GP practice or the mental health hub, which is another stream that we get referrals from. The need is picked up on and identified, the patient is referred to the SPLW. The SPLW will triage the patient. This is where they phone them and speak through with them about the things that they need and how it works, and being able to manage that referral, so the person knows that there is someone with them throughout the time whilst they wait. Then they connect them to the people, opportunities and the services that they feel will best suit the patient. Here we are, we discuss the problems they are facing, explore what is important to them, agree their goals and find local activities,



advice and services to help them access it. Very very rarely we do find that there isn't something that we can connect someone to, but we have found creative solutions in order to supplement things that the person might need. Contact me if you would like to find out more about social prescribing in Westminster.

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Veronica Franklin Gould, President, and Cicely Ryder-Belson, Social Prescribing Coordinator, Arts 4 Dementia, London.

VERONICA FRANKLIN GOULD FRSA founded Arts 4 Dementia (A4D) in 2011 to develop weekly programmes for early-stage dementia at arts venues, training, best practice conferences and reports. *Rearwakening the Mind (2012-13)* won the London 2012 Inspire Mark and Positive Breakthrough in Mental Health Dementia Award 2013. On publication of *Music Rearwakening (2015)*, Veronica was appointed A4D president. Her regional guide, *Rearwakening Integrated: Arts and Heritage (2017)*, maps arts opportunities for dementia and aligns arts within NHS England's Well Pathway for Dementia. Nominated Social Prescribing (SP) Innovator of the Year Finalist 2021, Veronica leads A4D's social prescribing programme, whose research findings will be disseminated with our report Arts for Brain Health: Social Prescribing as Peri-Diagnostic Practice for Dementia (September 2021).

CICELY RYDER-BELSON is Arts 4 Dementia's (A4D) Social Prescribing Coordinator, motivated by previous experience in projects that transform traditional gallery spaces into social and communal points of engagement. As an advocate for making art accessible for everyone, in her current role she liaises with people living with dementia, with surgeries, link workers and memory services to coordinate social prescribing dance and drama programmes for people experiencing early symptoms of dementia and their companions. Her insight and experience, interacting with participants, recording and helping to analyse findings in Southwark and following up these meetings, in assistance to the director, will help inform A4D's wider social prescribing research for dissemination in 2021.

'Arts 4 Dementia (A4D) Dance and Drama, Social Prescribing in Southwark'

When A4D launched our social prescribing programme two years ago, the NHS SPLW programme had begun; one thousand SPLW were to be introduced, to be available to every GP through their primary care network contract. This fantastic opportunity would enable people at the onset of dementia to take up arts to preserve their brain health, rather than endure months, years of strain until after diagnosis.

Throughout 2020 we piloted two programmes in the London Borough of Southwark: Siobhan Davies Dance and Southwark Playhouse each agreed to run three terms of eight weekly two-hour workshops - for up to eight individuals with symptoms, and partners. Workshop leaders were assisted by arts and medical students.

Each annual programme, the arts organisation, with A4D referral, coordination and evaluation, cost £16,000 or £2,000 per person with

Arts 4 Dementia.

dementia per year. Southwark Council provided £5,000, plus funding from the Big Lottery, trusts and foundations. Ideally, NHS charities should contribute to health-preserving programmes.

In preparation, we held a cross sector meeting with the Playhouse and Siobhan Davies presenting their dance and drama plans to GPs, SPLW, Southwark Council, London South Bank University and King's College London, who in turn presented their expectations from the programmes. Arts facilitators, students and SPLW attended our mild cognitive impairment and early-stage dementia training.

Referrals are always a challenge. Southwark's GP Social Prescribing Champion referred our first newly diagnosed participant and his wife and informed her primary care network GPs one of whom referred a participant who still awaits a diagnosis – perfect! We achieved six participants with dementia and three carers for the drama; and five with dementia and six carers for dance.

Cicely liaised weekly with GPs, memory services, participants and SPLW, who were barely in place until halfway through.

Post-COVID19, all except participants diagnosed over three years ago, responded with ingenuity across Zoom screens.

Feedback from Dance for the Brain:

- 'It feels like an art movement.' 'Each week is different'.
- 'This feeling of freedom you experience using your whole body – it is elating!'
- 'When you have someone who understands movement and also how the brain works, it becomes not just a movement class, but actually helps your mind work' (Carer).
- 'It was interesting to see the two dynamics – an impulse and an impact. They're quite advanced techniques.' (Dance artist)

Feedback from Muse of Fire:

- 'The drama gets your brain working – you get into the character.'
- 'It's amazing. You think something quick. You don't usually think like that! It means a lot to me.'
- 'I was able to prompt with ideas on character and how to add conflict to a scene. Seeing that, they were off and away.' (Drama student).

Arts 4 Dementia.

Medical student reports showed that weekly interaction with people experiencing early stages of various dementias gave valued insight. Learning from participants' creative abilities, each felt the experience would help their careers:

'I was surprised at how engaged participants were, really creative... enthusiastic about their characters, creating monologues, preparing props.' (King's neuroscience student).

'Participants asked us questions. We asked too, which made me more confident. I am excited to learn more about the benefits of drama.' (Queen Mary's Biomedical student).

'I witnessed how the participants were transformed by the power of creative activities, how those who were shy became more confident in expressing their ideas, eager to participate in the creative process. I believe this experience is very impactful in my journey to become a doctor, making me more empathetic, aware ... that it is vital to prospective doctors to see the effects of SP, by participating in arts projects for dementia.' (UCL Biomedical student).

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Jenny Marshall, Head of Member Experience, Open Age, London.

JENNY MARSHALL. As Manager of the Second Half Centre, she oversaw its growth until it hosted 600 members a week, 90+ hours of weekly activities lecture series with famous guest speakers and art exhibitions with leading artists. In April 2014 Open Age took over the running of the centre from its base in the former St Charles Hospital. After six years of leading on delivery for Open Age in North Kensington and specifically creative partnerships, in 2019, she was promoted to Head of Member Experience, which combines overseeing three centres and their respective teams along with leading on the arts and cultural strategy. She builds successful partnerships to promote social cohesion for older people and the arts. Open Age was a founding community partners in National Theatre's Public Acts programme. Members have joined a 200-cast performance of Pericles, on the Olivier stage and performed As You Like It at the Queens Theatre in Hornchurch. The Saatchi Gallery Members' Exhibition hosting 80 pieces of work, The Tate Modern Members' Exhibition in partnership with Flourishing Lives hosted 60 pieces of work, as part of the Tate Exchange programme, showcased on BBC Radio 4), the ongoing partnership with The Courtauld Institute of Art.

'Open Age'

At Open Age, we run a broad range of low cost, high quality group activities. This tends to be through three main categories. We have got physical activity, informal learning and arts, culture and social

The Open Age model		
What we do Wide range of low cost, high quality group activities Physical activity, informal learning, arts and culture, social groups, all delivered by qualified tutors.	How we do it Free to join, centre based, membership model Dedicated centres allow connections to be made & maintained, and community delivery increases our reach & lets us go where our members are.	Our impact Increased wellbeing and social connections Our members are more active, stay healthier and are less lonely. As a result, they access less health and care services.

groups, all delivered by qualified tutors. We have dedicated spaces at our centres, in which we deliver in, and actually in addition to this, we also deliver things in a host of community venues. This is because not only do we want to expand our delivery, but we want to go where the members are, as well as them coming to us. Our impact is that we have increased wellbeing and social connections, our members are more active, whether it is physically or mentally, less lonely, and as a result, access less health and care services. To give you a quick stats crunch, we have 4500 active members currently, 1500 attending each week, and we deliver this across 50-60 different venues.

Jenny Marshall, Open Age, London.

The key to our success is that we have a variety of inexpensive classes, so generally we charge £1 per hour, per activity, and this is basically saying there is no barrier to entering our activities. There is also a choice, because we work with people from the age of 50 – 104, so we want to ensure there is a diverse choice which reflects the diversity of our membership. What is important to note is that this is a member led organisation, so members feel that it is theirs, they own it. They do not just go to a yoga class, they come to Open Age. They are part of a self-made community.

If people have difficulty accessing our service, we have a Link-up programme which is run by our outreach and support services. They provide short term interventions to our members and break down those barriers that they might experience when accessing our activities. The list includes Time for Me, a wide range of activities and peer support for people aged 50+ who are unpaid carers. Men's Space, we have established that probably about 25% of our members are men, so this acts as a gateway in order to help them be introduced into the broader programmes. In the home are phone groups designed for people who are housebound or are experiencing mobility issues or accessing activities in person, so they can have a social group over the phone.

More specifically, for this audience, we run a broad range of arts and culture activities. We very much like to work with organisations to connect with local culture and also to give our members the opportunity to do so. One example would be the Public Acts programme that we were part of, we were one of the founding community partners, which was a nation-wide initiative to create extraordinary acts of theatre in the community. There was a 200-cast performance at the National Theatre on the Olivier Stage in the first year, performing *Pericles*. In the second year, *As You Like It* at the Queens Theatre in Hornchurch. We've also have 80 members exhibit their art work as part of an exhibition at the Saatchi, a partnership that we continue to nurture, even online. Which brings me smoothly to our remote delivery.

We provide activities at a low cost is to ensure older people, from all socio-economic backgrounds are able to take part in our activities.

Since COVID19, we have transferred activities onto online and have upskilled 300 members on how to use Zoom. We have gone from no remote activity and never doing anything before, to 130 hours a week currently, growing by the week.

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Khadeja Chowdhury, Project Manager, Bromley-by-Bow Centre, London.

KHADEJA CHOWDHURY, specialist in developing programmes that build connection and community for older and isolated people, has worked at the Bromley by Bow Centre for over twelve years. The Centre is a pioneering and vibrant community charity in East London, renowned for its radical approach to health and wellbeing, working with vulnerable people in an area experiencing high levels of deprivation. Khadeja runs a team engaging elderly residents to become active citizens, sharing their wealth of experience and skills with their local community. During the COVID19 pandemic, the service continued supporting people remotely, with an arts project encouraging older people to connect and reflect using collage and traditional methods of communication. Skilled in managing projects that deliver power back into communities, Khadeja has worked alongside Tower Hamlets Council to facilitate the award and implementation of small grants programmes that support local residents to set-up individual projects, activities and groups that improve the health and wellbeing of their local areas.

‘Space to Connect.’

I work at the Bromley by Bow Centre in East London on a project called Space to Connect, which is a project for older people. The Space to Connect is an older people’s project which works with clients over the age of fifty. It is a service that promotes creative activities and health lifestyles. It aims to connect people and help build friendships and is very much a cultural and diverse group of people who meet on a regular basis across all our activities. 80% of our referrals are from our social prescribing team; 10% are from our internal projects and as we have other projects on site, 10% are from our external partners. Clients can also self-refer, it is a very easy process for them if they want to join any activities, and they can take part just by speaking to one of the staff on the project.

When the referrals come through, we have one-to-one consultation with each individual client, figuring out what their needs are, how we can best support them to access all the services we have at the centre, including all the Space to Connect projects. We see some clients who are at the early onset of dementia, and we work with them and their support workers and their family, to make sure that they get the best service from us. Making a plan, setting some goals for them, meeting once a week attending a session online, as much as they can.

Khadeja Chowdhury, Bromley-by-Bow Centre.

These are some of the activities we have been doing online during lockdown, all of our activities have moved online, and clients have been able to access them through Zoom and WhatsApp. Some of things they have been doing is creative activities, things like crochet, knitting, cooking. When government guidelines have allowed it, we have been able to have some walking groups to meet on site, and very recently we have been working on an arts project with some local artists for the Let's Stick Together project, which you can find on Instagram at the moment. Clients are very welcome to move across projects if they find it is not stimulating enough for them, or they are not interested in it and want to try something new. We can move them across different areas of the project, but also within Centre, because anything that they are interested in, they can get involved with. It is very easy to move from each activity, because a lot of them are very flexible.

On a regular basis we do wellbeing check in with our clients who are accessing things online. But also onsite we have talks about how we are feeling, how are moods are that week. We use



the 'Mood tree' and it just opens up discussions for everyone to try and find out where they are this week on this mood tree and have a conversation with the rest of the group if they wish to.

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